

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of the  
Woodbury County, Iowa  
Adult and Juvenile Drug Court Programs

by

Dwight Vick  
Assistant Professor of Political Science  
University of South Dakota  
January 23, 2006

*ABSTRACT: Woodbury County, Iowa created a community panel-based drug court program to meet an increasing need for a program that serves an alternative to incarceration for nonviolent drug and alcohol offenders. The article describes the program as its creation and implementation equally applies to both adult and juvenile offenders. It follows with a discussion of the cost-effectiveness formula and methodology and the results of a 36-month period of evaluation of its 2002 program graduates. The results show the county's drug court program requires additional funding at the onset of the client's involvement. While these costs are higher when compared to traditional programs, they have a higher overall success rate. Drug Court graduates are far less likely to re-offend, commit criminal acts, or re-enter the system upon release.*

## Introduction

Drug courts began in Dade County, Florida, in the 1980s as a result of several situations that simultaneously occurred simultaneously throughout many communities: an increase in drug-related arrests, conviction rates and prison populations; increased incarceration costs; decreased funding for state prisons, local jails and rehabilitative programs (Belenko, 1998a and 1998b; Wilhelm and Turner, 2002). Without treatment prior to and immediately after release, drug offenders were more likely to recommit crime and violate probation or parole than any other group (Hughes and Wilson, 2003). This led to the expansion of the Dade County Drug Court model throughout the United States. Its popularity spread throughout the 1990s as a less expensive and more effective treatment option that decreased drug- and alcohol-related crime and arrests (Banks and Gottfredson, 2004; Belenko, 1998a and 1998b; ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse, 1998; Shanahan, M., Lancsar, E., et. al, 2004; U.S. Department of Justice, 1997).

The primary goal of any drug court program is to create a cost-effective alternative to the traditional penal system by targeting drug and alcohol abusers who commit non-violent criminal and civil crimes. They are a court-coerced substance abuse intervention and treatment program. Drug courts combine legally imposed sanctions with prosecution, probation and judicial monitoring, graduated sanctions, drug testing, and drug-treatment services. Persons who participate in the program are monitored by their defense lawyers as well as a court administrator, probation officer, treatment provider, and a judge. Throughout their participation the program, clients are expected to complete one's General Educational Development (GED) and/or begin college or technical training, obtain stable employment, as well as meet current financial and social obligations (U.S. Department of Justice, 2002).

Several scholarly journals and government agencies have published articles or monographs on the cost-effectiveness of the drug court program; however, they are limited (Belenko, et al., 1994; Belenko, 1998a; 1998b; 2001). Most focused upon the outcomes; unfortunately, they lack methodological rigor. They primarily focus upon a single community's drug court program. The outcomes of these studies do not explain rival hypotheses, statistical analyses, and inconsistencies. As a result, these situations prevent an effective national, regional or statewide evaluation. (Gottfredson, Kearley, et. al, 2005; Shannon, Kearney, et. al, 2004; Stanford and Arrigo, 2005; U.S. Department of Justice, 2002). While these situations prevent generalizability to other drug court programs, it appears drug courts are effective in decreasing alcohol- and drug-related crime and recidivism (Breckinridge, et. al, 2000; U.S. Government Accounting Office, 2005; Peters and Murrin, 2000; Shanahan, M., Lancsar, Emily, et. al,

2004; Spohn, et al. 2001). Woodbury County, Iowa's Drug Court Program is among those that demonstrated its unique system reduces recidivism rates among its graduates (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005). This paper is part of a larger, comprehensive five-year follow-up study of drug court participants in and the recidivism rates of the Woodbury County Drug Court Program.

Based in Sioux City, Iowa, the program began in the late 1990s. Like all other American communities that created a drug court program, citizens grew concerned over the increased substance abuse rates, incarceration rates, court dockets, and their subsequent financial burdens to and on the community. The group worked with law enforcement and court personnel to implement a community-based drug court program whereby the clients would report to a community panel rather than a judge. The community-based model was first one implemented in the United States and has proven to have one of the lower recidivism rates in the country. (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

The primary goals of this paper are four fold: 1) expand research beyond the 2005 Woodbury County recidivism study; 2) to discuss the community-based drug court model; 3) to present an economic evaluation of the Woodbury County, Iowa Drug Court Program; and 4) to compare and contrasts the financial and social costs between the traditional probation system and the community-based Drug Court Program.

#### Description of the Woodbury County Community-Based Drug Court Program

##### *Theoretical Foundations*

The Woodbury County Drug Court Program operates under two theories: the theory of therapeutic jurisprudence and social bonds theory. Theoretical jurisprudence (TJ) is a legal theory that finds its roots in several disciplines: law, psychology, psychiatry, criminology, criminal justice, public health, and philosophy (Wexler, 1996). Focusing primarily upon offender rehabilitation, TJ examines options that impact a client's behavior and well-being. Ultimately, it is designed to support a more pro-social and mainstream lifestyle through a multidisciplinary approach that is within legal boundaries. Legal representatives – prosecutors, defense lawyers, judges, probation officers, treatment providers – act as legal and behavioral change agents. If these legal actions are entrenched within the system, therapeutic jurisprudence can create change within a person by using cognitive dissonance methods. This increases self-efficacy and decisional balance that encourages the person to become part of mainstream society. A client's participation in a structured environment, like a drug court setting, encourages

verbal processing to become engrained into the client's psyche through environmental and behavioral actions. In essence, TJ is an "ethic of care" (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

As defined within that ethic of care lies social bonds theory. It focuses upon four psychological and sociological actions that promote socialization and conformity, particularly among juveniles: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. The stronger the bonds between these feelings, the less likely a person will be delinquent. As in the case of juveniles, the more attached they are to their parents, school, and community, the less likely they are to commit crimes and jeopardize those relationships. The stronger their commitment to and involvement in pro-social activities and commonly held morals and ethics, the less likely a juvenile will commit crime. Lastly, the belief component of a society's value system allows an offender to accept society's value system (Adler, Mueller, and Laufer, 2004; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005). Similar concepts apply to adults as well as children.

The community court system, like the Woodbury County Drug Court Program, allow its clients, both juvenile and adult, to form attachments with their panel members and probation officers. The panel court members encourage the client to establish permanent employment or obtain higher educational goals thereby encouraging pro-social behaviors and values. The panel members assist the person to transition from his or her subcultural lifestyle to one within mainstream society. While these theories provide a foundation upon which a community-based drug court operates, it could not exist without its legislative or financial support. Through federal grant funding and the Iowa State Legislature, Woodbury County created the community-based system the incorporates these theoretical models.

#### *Legislative and Bureaucratic Support*

The Iowa State Assembly passed the *Model Drug Offender Accountability and Treatment Act* in 1999 to assist local communities creating a drug court program within their communities (Iowa HSB 221, 1999). HSB 221 and Chapter 80E of Iowa State Law created the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy (GODCP). The agency manages and coordinates statewide drug court programs through several state and local agencies like the state Department of Corrections, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Safety, and state judicial districts. The Woodbury County program involves not only these state organizations but also local agencies and service providers thereby mirroring the statewide organizational involvement.

The U.S. Department of Justice provided \$400K over the first four years of the project. In 2004, the statewide program was primarily funded by the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Grant Program (hereby referred to as the Byrne Grant). The Byrne Grant is a competitive, federal block grant program that provides state and local governments funds to “reduce crime and improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system, reduce the availability and demand for illegal drugs, increase offender accountability and improve offender habilitation, and enhance youth and family wellness” (Prouty, 2002). It is a matching grant with a five-year lifespan. It requires the state to contribute to 25 percent of its overall expenditures. The State of Iowa assumes all financial responsibilities at the beginning of the sixth year of the program. While the Iowa State Legislature and Governor’s Office continue to support the program, it decreased its funding from \$5.6 million in 2004 to \$3.2 million in 2005, a total of \$2.4 million or 42 percent (G.P. Niles, personal communication, February 28, 2005; Prouty, 2002). Even with these cutbacks, the Woodbury County Drug Court program upholds its mission statement and goals.

#### *Mission Statement and Organizational Goals*

The court’s mission statement is “to demonstrate an innovative, comprehensive, and integrated approach to substance abuse treatment among offending juveniles and adults by coupling the coercive power of the court with substance abuse services” (Gendreau and Andrews, 2001; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005). The organization’s goals include:

- Increasing the effectiveness of substance abuse treatment among offenders by:
  - Reducing substance abuse in Woodbury County;
  - Decreasing substance abuse related crimes;
  - Curtailing increasing rates in detention facilities, state training schools, and residential treatment placements; and
  - Increasing functioning in other areas of the justice system.
- Expediting case processes and thereby:
  - Reducing the duration of incarceration;
  - Alleviating court docket crowding; and
  - Increasing system effectiveness (Gendreau and Andrews, 2001, p. 6; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005, p.24)

The mission statement and operational goals reflect the spirit of legal and theoretical underpinnings of any drug court program while allowing each drug court program to implement within a context that is acceptable to all persons and organizations involved with the project.

#### *Organizational Structure of the Community Panel System*

According to Gary Niles, Chief Judicial Court Officer and Drug Court Coordinator for the Third Judicial District of the State of Iowa, the Woodbury County Drug Court Program was implemented to meet the needs brought to state leaders by county residents and local officials. The program almost failed due overbooked court dockets, preventing judges from allocating most of their time toward the emerging drug court program.

Under Niles' direction, the community group asked if the judges could allocate one to two hours weekly toward the program. The Third Judicial District would undertake most of the administrative requirements and would seek to advertise for community members to volunteer on as community drug court panel judges. This would free the judges' dockets to hear more pressing cases while encouraging the implementation of the community panel program.

The group proposed that three to four persons sit on a community panel to work with each client. While they have varying professional backgrounds, ranging from a tattoo artist to local business owners and from physicians to a motorcycle mechanic, most of them have extensive training in substance abuse treatment or are involved with the local recovering community. A panel spends a minimum of 15 minutes each month with the client while the assigned probation officer closely supervises each participant. The panel members are trained by the judges and judicial court staff as to their rights and privileges as a community court judge. They are expected to attend quarterly training sessions on related topics. Within three days of the announcement, over 85 people applied for one of the 24 openings. The panel members were chosen by the initial group of concerned citizens and the program began mid-1999 (G. P. Niles, Personal Communication, February 28, 2005). Once the criteria was established for panel member selection, the group developed criteria for client acceptance into the program.

#### *Criteria for Acceptance into Drug Court*

The requirements for a potential client's acceptance into the program are: 1) have a demonstrated history of physical abuse and/or psychological dependence of a mood-altering substance; 2) committed non-violent crimes that primarily resulted from one's addiction; and 3) live within and committed crime within the Woodbury County area. Most referrals to drug court programs occur at the pre-plea phase and it is used to encourage the offender to

participate in the program rather than enter the traditional court and incarceration system. However, a person's sentence, fines, and community service hours are not reduced as an incentive to participate in the program. This is one factor that separates the Woodbury County Drug Court Program from others: It is a post-plea referral system. Potential clients are required to have a demonstrated problem with alcohol and drugs and they cannot use it while plea-bargaining with the District Attorney's Office. The client spends approximately the same amount of time in jail as any other person who commits a similar crime but does not qualify or cannot enter the drug court program.

In most cases, the client has committed a nonviolent, alcohol- or drug-related crime. If the client has not committed such a crime but is believed to have a problem by his/her probation officer, the client is asked to take the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI). This is administered by the probation officer. The psychological screening tool measures a person's conscious and subconscious attempts to conceal an alcohol or drug problem. While there are adult and adolescent versions of SASSI, the test's accuracy is unaffected by gender, ethnicity, occupational status, marital status, age, disability, or years of formal education (Lazowski, et al, 1998; SASSI Institute, 2005). Other psychological tests may be administered to corroborate the SASSI findings; however, SASSI is the primary tool used to diagnose the potential participant's alcoholism and/or drug addiction. Therefore, a non-violent offender who is at moderate-to-high risk of continued substance abuse is more likely to be assigned to the Drug Court Program.

If the client receives a score that establishes the likelihood of an underlying substance abuse issue, the client is referred by the courts or a probation officer to the Drug Court Program. An interview with a Drug Court probation officer is scheduled along with a local treatment provider. Once the required level of psychological support is determined, the probation officer contacts the Woodbury County Attorney's Office and all other relevant organizations. The potential client signs a contract committing him- or herself to the program and they are assigned to a panel. At which point, the client reports to the same three- to four-member panel, called a "home panel" throughout their participation in the program. This period usually lasts, on average, one year to 18 months. The client and probation officer know each other well by this juncture of the relationship; as a result, the client may be matched with a panel that will best provide the direction he or she needs to help them remain drug- and alcohol-free and become a contributing member of mainstream society (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005). Often times, a client is randomly assigned to a panel as well.

Once the theoretical and legal foundation is established, the client will be eligible for graduation when the following conditions are met: 1) obtain and/or maintain steady employment or remain in school/university; 2) complete all community service requirements; 3) pay all fines and court costs; 4) provide proof of attendance to his/her treatment provider and 12-step programs; 5) maintain continuous contact with probation officer; 6) provide evidence of continuous sobriety at the point of graduation via regular and/or periodic urinalysis (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

In order for these six overarching goals are met, the client must successfully complete four phases. During Phase I, the panel's primary goal is client stabilization. They establish the four tenets of social bonds theory. This is usually accomplished within the first two months of the program. They are expected to "obtain a substance abuse evaluation and comply with the [drug court] recommendations" and "terminate all relationships with using associates and provide the Drug Court with an associates list" (Third Judicial District, 1999, pg 1). Clients accepted into Phase II are expected to earnestly seek stable employment and/or continue educational requirements as well as obtain more meaningful relationships. They are required to follow their treatment plan, which includes attending 12-step meetings; as a result, they are expected to have a 12-step sponsor and report this to the panel. For anonymity reasons, the client is not required to report the full name of their sponsor to the panel members. During the third phase, the clients are expected to maintain their new lifestyle. This usually lasts about three to six months. The clients are accountable for their behaviors at each of the three levels. The panel may impose sanctions or incentives that are proportional to the client's actions. Sanctions include, but are not limited to the following: verbal admonishment, increased number of community service hours, writing assignments, increased number of drug court appearances, or placed in detention or jail until the client can see a judge within the next 24- to 48-hours. Over-achieving clients are rewarded with incentives like verbal praise, fine or community service hour reduction, and early promotion to the next phase. At the fourth, and final, phase the client is prepared for graduation as the need for a more structured environment is not deemed necessary and most, if not all, of their legal obligations have been met (Third Judicial District, 1999, pg 1). The client does not graduate unless all persons involved with the client agree to his or her graduation; at which point, the client receives a certificate of completion. Gifts and dessert may be shared among the panel members, the client, the probation officer, and any other persons who are present at that time (G. P. Niles, Personal Communication, February 28, 2005; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis and Methods Used in Evaluating the Woodbury County Drug Court Program



The primary purpose of the cost-effectiveness analysis is to develop and evaluate an efficient and effective formula that determines the recidivism rates among drug court clients and the program's relevant costs. The evaluation covers the period from January to December, 2002. The follow-up study was completed over the next 30 months. Persons who were terminated or recidivated during their participation in either system were not included in the evaluation.

#### *Qualifications for Participation*

Participants included in the analysis are those persons who entered drug court or the conventional court system in 2002. The study evaluates cases of persons who fit the following qualifications: 1) committed exact same crime in the Woodbury County area; 2) entered in and fulfilled all requirements of the drug court program or the conventional court system in 2002; 3) met similar demographic requirements – race, gender, age, and zip code; 4) public information about the client's legal involvement was available through the Iowa Criminal Information System (ICIS), the state's publicly accessible criminal justice program; 5) exposure to treatment and/or 12-step programs; and 6) randomly selected to participate in the study.

Since the project focused upon persons involved with the criminal justice system, the researchers made every reasonable effort to protect the vulnerable population. The principal investigator applied for and received permission from the university's internal review board. A Certificate of Confidentiality was received from the National Institutes of Health in Washington, D.C. and confidentiality agreements were filed with the State of Iowa. Even though the project accessed public records for the evaluation, efforts were made to contact those involved in the study; however, the participants are a transient population and efforts to reach them individually were largely unsuccessful. However, the study was announced at a press conference and covered by area media outlets in July, 2005. Director Gary Niles was interviewed by local radio personalities about the program and its ongoing research during peak listening hours over the next two weeks. As a result, the researchers and the staff of the Third Judicial Court District believe every reasonable option to contact former participants. Upon reviewing census data, the groups are confident the former clients were aware of the project.

While the subculture may be mobile, 2000 Woodbury County Census Data for show 82.9 percent of Woodbury County citizens have lived in the same house or within the county over the past 10 years (U.S. Census Reports, 2000). Panel members who are involved with 12-step programs reported seeing former clients attending

their meetings and talked with them on occasion. Based upon this information, it is expected that most former clients remain in the area or frequently interact with family and friends who remain in Woodbury County.

Personal identifying details of those persons who participated in the drug court program and those who did not participate were removed when possible. Researchers signed letters of confidentiality prior to beginning the research and filed them with the Third Judicial District. If any identifying information was revealed to the investigators, they would be accountable to the State of Iowa and could face criminal and ethical charges that could result in one year in state prison and up to \$1000 in fines.

The researchers did have a list of names of all 2002 graduates and was able to access publicly available information about any criminal, civil, or traffic violations that occurred since graduation. But all reasonable efforts to prevent any correlation between the names and the files were taken. However, their records are publicly available through the Iowa Court Information System (ICIS) website, [http://www.judicial.state.ia.us/online\\_records/](http://www.judicial.state.ia.us/online_records/). As a result, the researchers made every reasonable effort to protect the anonymity of the participants and uphold legal and ethical standards of the University of South Dakota, the States of Iowa and South Dakota, and the National Institutes of Health while still accessing follow-up information.

#### *Costs Associated with Effectiveness Measures and Costs*

Using similar calculations used by Shanahan and Lanscar in their cost effectiveness analysis of the New South Wales (NSW), Australia, Drug Court Program, the Woodbury County evaluation examines the long-term effectiveness of the program for the past 30 months. The Woodbury County program is a complex organization, much like the NSW program, which involves numerous agencies. This formula was most similar to the program that exists in Woodbury County. Furthermore, the NSW formula provided reliability and validity to the study as it was proven in a previous academic study (Shanahan and Lanscar, 1997).

While Drug Court provides a four-phase system to assist the clients, each person's program is often managed on an individual basis. This allows treatment providers, counselors, probation officers, courts, lawyers, and community members to be involved with the program. The cost evaluation follows conventional data collection methods: 1) identify activities and costs; 2) identify financial resources; 3) costs per unit of service; and 4) the value of those resources (Shanahan and Lanscar, 1997). The formula used in the New South Wales Drug Court Program used the following equation:

$$\text{Total cost per person} = (\text{average assessment costs}) + (\text{average cost of court appearances} \times \text{number of court appearances}) + (\text{average cost of treatment} \times \text{number of days in treatment}) + (\text{average costs of probation and parole} \times \text{numbers of days})$$

In the New South Wales study, the average cost per client is estimated by using the following formula:

$$\text{Average cost per day on program} = \text{total costs} / \text{total days in the program}$$

(Shanahan and Lanscar, 1997, p. 10).

Due to slight program differences and available figures, the formula implemented to estimate the Woodbury County's program costs per the Drug Court and traditional clients was adjusted to include the following data:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total cost per person} = & (\text{average court costs}) + (\text{average assessment and treatment costs}) \\ & + (\text{average monitoring costs}) + \text{average cost of treatment} \times \text{number of days in treatment} + \\ & (\text{average costs of probation and parole} \times \text{numbers of days}) \end{aligned}$$

Total costs for Year 2002 Drug Court clients and the control groups were determined by obtaining the average total cost per individual. This average is obtained by dividing the total costs of the each group by the total number of days.

$$\text{Average costs per client per program} = \text{total costs} / \text{number of 2002 clients}$$

All costs associated with the exposed and control groups will be subdivided into adult and juvenile costs (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Resource Allocation of Funds**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Subcategory</i>
Court	Adult and Juvenile Probation Officers and Juvenile Trackers Court Administration Costs and Fines
Assessment	Referral and assessment by officials
Treatment	Clinical and pharmaceutical treatment – Inpatient, Intensive Outpatient, and Continuing Care
Monitoring	Urinalysis Ankle Bracelets Patrolling Costs Home Arrest

### *Limitations*

As with all drug court programs, there are several limitations that may impact the overall study. First, their assignment to either Drug Court or the traditional system is based upon the SASSI score: Those with higher scores are assigned to Drug Court. However, a client may be assigned to the traditional program yet required to attend 12-step meetings. It was more difficult to formulate a control group because of the inability to determine if a person was exposed to treatment or 12-step programs. Therefore, the comparison group had no evidence of seeking support; however, the researchers cannot guarantee the clients were immune to any treatment program or support group.

Post-release incarceration costs cannot be accurately measured. While it costs \$60 daily to house an adult prisoner and \$150 to house a juvenile in detention, clients are jailed approximately 24 hours prior to judicial hearing. At which time, a person may be released or imprisoned. In most cases, the person is released unless the individual committed a criminal act that requires imprisonment or bail. Obtaining this information would extend beyond the scope of all confidentiality agreements.

The time estimates that are allocated to clients by their lawyers and school probation officers varied. An interview with Robert Sikma, a local defense attorney and Drug Court panel member, stated he spends up to 100 pro bono hours on non-Drug Court juvenile cases. However, Sikma is a well-known lawyer who has many years of state and federal litigation experience; as a result, judges may ask him to work with more time-consuming situations. He is not work with clients involved with Drug Court outside of the panel; however, he believed the estimate may be too low (Robert Sikma, personal communication, January 5, 2006).

The amount of time a school probation officer or part-time tracker was estimated as well. Visinet of Iowa and the school liaison officers were contacted by telephone during the course of this study. Even though they were contacted three times during the course of the study, some could not estimate their time while others did not return messages. Probation officers and school counselors who work closely with school liaison officers were briefly asked for their opinion on the estimated time spent by school officers on Drug Court clients. The average estimate is 20 percent. Due to the lack of response by some providers, the percentage may not be as accurate as the researchers would prefer.

Due to more intensive program requirements for juvenile offenders, the costs will be higher than those for adults. Unlike most drug court programs in the United States, both adult and juvenile programs are post-plea agreements in the Woodbury County program; therefore incarceration costs prior to sentencing and the amount of time served in jail have no budgetary impact on the program. Furthermore, detoxification costs are not a responsibility of Drug Court because the client has received those services prior to entering the program. The Drug Court program and traditional correctional system would pay for assessments and counseling. The administrative costs to complete and analyze SASSI are considered a primary job responsibility; therefore, it would be considered part of the probation officer's salaries. However, assessment and treatment costs would differ based upon the individual needs of the clients regardless of their legal status. If a person committed similar crimes after release from either drug court or the traditional justice system, the incurred costs are not paid by the Drug Court Program but through the budget for the Woodbury County Department of Correction and the county's general fund. As a result, it is a societal cost that must be considered in evaluating outcomes.

There are other societal costs that cannot be measured but could impact the study. Juveniles who are Drug Court clients do not substantially contribute to the local or state tax base. At most, they have part-time jobs while they remain in high school, technical training, or college. While their adult counterparts are more likely to remain employed and own property in the Woodbury County area, it was not possible to access their financial data. Therefore, it is impossible to determine the amount the adult Drug Court participants contribute in local and state taxes. As a result of their participation in Drug Court, juvenile and adult clients remain in school or on the job. They earn a salary that allows them to remain independent or be less dependent upon public assistance and pay related court fees. Similar situations may exist among those who participate in the traditional probationary system.

Information was collected from public record and by interviewing service providers and government officials associated with the program. Real time invested into each Drug Court phase and the persons involved were not available; in most cases, the time was not documented. Any estimates are based upon interviews with probation officers and administrative support staff employed within the Woodbury County Judicial System. As a result, the report will focus upon the cost-effectiveness of the program.

Table 1 outlines the categories used to estimate costs. (Shanahan and Lanscar, 1997).

## Results

### *Program Costs for Drug Court Participants*

## **Administrative and Court Costs**

### *Juveniles*

Court-related costs include the following areas within the Drug Court program: court administration, court fees, judge and panelist costs as well as legal expenses. These figures were obtained from interviews with Doug Noble, budget analyst for the Third Judicial District, and annual financial reports submitted by Noble to funding authorities (Doug Noble, personal interviews, August 2005 – January 2006).

Since Woodbury County Drug Court is a post-plea program, police and investigation expenses are indirect costs. The court system pays approximately the same amount per juvenile investigation regardless of the crime or sentence. Other factors such as victim compensation, lost wages, jury and witness time have little, if any, impact on the related expenses. Victims may be compensated, especially if the offender is of legal age or considered to be an adult at sentencing. However, if juvenile clients are expected to pay damages, they are court-ordered to do so by completing an assigned number of community service hours. This information was available inconsistently per client so their contributions cannot be used to offset Juvenile Drug Court investment. Many juvenile clients are usually not employed and are full-time students; therefore, lost wages from any employment situation would not apply. Juvenile court hearing have no associated jury costs; additionally, costs to witnesses would be limited to those who were victimized by the juvenile and the parent/guardian of the child in question. As a result, lost income due to victim or parental involvement cannot be accurately measured and reflected in the overall societal costs. These costs remain at or near zero as all Drug Court hearings occur between 6:30 and 9:30 p.m. every Wednesday evening. Clients meet monthly for a minimum of 15 minutes with their panel; if deemed necessary, the panel may require the client return every week or biweekly until meeting with his or her regularly scheduled home panel meeting. This occurs due to the panel's concern for the client's mental or physical health that may cause relapse into negative psychological or social behaviors. With these factors in mind, one can determine most associated Drug Court expenses are administrative. They are currently and primarily paid through federal and state grant dollars.

Funded primarily with Byrne Grant and Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Grant dollars, Drug Court spent on average, \$277,758.75 annually on administrative costs over the life of the program. These costs include salaries and benefits for 3.5 juvenile probation officers equaling \$202,979.95. Three administrative assistants and the chief administrator of the program receive 20 to 50 percent of their salaries and benefits from the

grant, an amount totaling \$74,778.80. Collectively, they monitor an average of 105 juveniles each year with approximately 25 percent graduating each year of the program's existence. No court reporter records the minutes of each hearing. They are taped and transcribed while a panel member writes the highlights of each session. A transcriber spends 10 hours weekly typing minutes. The person is paid \$50 per hour, earning \$26,000 annually.

District judges donate the time allocated to Drug Court proceedings. Two associate juvenile judges can sentence criminals found guilty of drug-related, nonviolent crimes to Drug Court. Each juvenile judge donates one hour of his or her time to hear, assign, and follow-up with probation officers and clients about one's progress. Their donated time equals \$6,732 annually ( $164.73/\text{hr} \times 1\text{hr. wkly.} \times 52\text{ wks}$ ) throughout the program. While exact estimates are not available, lawyers with the Juvenile Justice Center, located in Sioux City, estimated each lawyer spends three hours on average per juvenile case at a cost of \$50 per hour. In 2002, 24 juvenile clients were admitted and completed Drug Court costing the county \$7,200 in legal fees ( $\$50 \times 3\text{ hrs} \times 24\text{ clients}$ ). Since community members are trained by and serve as voluntary members of the Drug Court Program, their annual donated contributions totaling \$24,360 as in-kind contributions [ $(8\text{ community judges} \times 4\text{ hours} \times \$17.50\text{ in dollar value}) \times 52\text{ weeks}$ ]. They are provided dinner for each night the panel member serves. The average costs of dinners for the volunteer community panel judges equals \$218 each meal and served a total of 52 weeks, costing \$11,371.98 annually. These community volunteers save the Woodbury County Drug Court Program \$12,988.02 annually.

#### *Adults*

Like the juvenile portion of the Woodbury County Drug Court Program, the adult version is administered post-plea by a smaller staff. Adult Drug Court participants are monitored more closely than most adult probationers; however, they are more responsible for their own actions than their juvenile counterparts.

Adult participants are more likely to be required to pay all court fees and victim compensation, or restitution, to the victim(s) than their juvenile counterparts. Community service hours may be assigned at sentencing, particularly if the client is unemployed at that time. No trial information was available through Adult Probation Services; therefore, no information was available to determine if any adult Drug Court client went to jury trial. However, the researchers obtained a list of people who graduated from Drug Court in 2002. According to the Iowa Court Information System (ICIS) website, [http://www.judicial.state.ia.us/online\\_records/](http://www.judicial.state.ia.us/online_records/), there is no evidence of any client going to a jury trial and being sentenced to drug court at sentencing. The number of community service hours as well as total restitution amounts was not available for either source.

Based upon Lamb-Keating and Vick's research into recidivism rates within this program, approximately 75 percent of adult clients are employed at the time of sentencing to the program. They tend to be employed in lower-paying /lower socio-economic jobs such as: general laborer, food service preparer, construction worker, telecommunications or sales person, truck driver, or health care worker. Once the adult client begins Drug Court, he or she meets with his or her home panel during off-work, evening hours. Furthermore, the client meets with one's probation officer during off-work hours as well. Therefore, lost wages are not a significant factor in the analysis for participating in Drug Court. The participants are able to pay court fees and restitution over time or risk remaining in drug court or probation for a longer period of time.

Two probation officers work directly with adult clients, each earning \$65,879.73 in salary and benefits, totaling \$131,759.46. They manage approximately 35 cases each, averaging 70 clients annually. While all adult records are maintained within their system, the two adult officers coordinate drug court hearings directly through administrative staff housed within the Juvenile Services Center.

As do their juvenile counterparts, district judges and district associate judges donate the time allocated to Drug Court proceedings. Their donated time equals \$26,037 annually throughout the program  $\{[(174.25/\text{hr} \times 1\text{ hr. wkly.} \times 52\text{ wks}) \times 5\text{ judges}] + [(164.73 \times 1\text{ hr. wkly} \times 52\text{ wks}) \times 3\text{ judges}] = 19,305 + 10,098\}$ . While exact estimates are not available, lawyers with the Juvenile Justice Center, located in Sioux City, estimated each public defense lawyer spends three hours on average per case at a average cost of \$50 per hour. In 2002, 19 adult clients were admitted and completed Drug Court costing the county \$5,700 in legal fees  $[(\$50 \times 3\text{ hrs} \times 19\text{ clients}) \times 2\text{ groups}]$ . Since community panel members hear both juvenile and adult cases, their in-kind contributions are equally shared between both groups. Their annual donated contributions totaling \$35,755.20 as in-kind contributions  $[(10\text{ community judges} \times 4\text{ hours} \times \$17.19\text{ in dollar value contributions}) \times 52\text{ weeks}]$  (National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, 2004). They are provided dinner for each night the panel member serves. The average costs of dinners for the volunteer community panel judges equals \$218 each meal and served a total of 52 weeks, costing \$11,371.98 annually. These community volunteers save the Woodbury County Drug Court Program \$12,988.02 annually.

### **Assessment and Treatment**

By the time a client is sentenced to Drug Court, service needs are adjudicated. One's treatment needs are incorporated into their probation and the client's substance abuse issues are a primary focus. All persons who are



sentenced to Drug Court will be required to participate in counseling and rehabilitation programs. The requirements vary based upon the client's level of dependence and abuse history, psychological and physical health concerns, and living situation. Their individual needs are determined by a substance abuse therapist, the probation officer, the courts, and the client. Re-evaluation occurs throughout the client's involvement in Drug Court and may be reported to the courts at any time.

For purposes of this cost-effectiveness study, the research examines those persons who were accepted and completed the Drug Court program during the 2002 calendar year. Cost estimates are consolidated for several reasons: 1) the program had existed for two years at this point so major administrative issues had been resolved; 2) associated costs were more easily estimated based upon two years of initial experience and future projections would remain stable; 3) clear communication lines were established between the courts, the administrative staff, and supporting governmental and nonprofit agencies that work with clients; and 4) the courts had precedence which could be utilized in sentencing nonviolent, addicted clients to the Drug Court Program. However, assessment and treatment require rolling admissions so there are some persons who began in 2001 and completed in 2002 and others who began during calendar year 2002 and did not complete until 2003 or 2004. They were not considered within the cohort of those who entered and completed the program during 2002.

#### *Juveniles*

During 2002, 24 juveniles were sentenced to Drug Court by one of the two juvenile court judges. All received treatment at Jackson Recovery Center, a state-approved juvenile substance abuse treatment facility. While the range of required services and necessary expenses widely varied, the Woodbury County Drug Court Program and the Third Judicial District spent \$7608.71 per juvenile who entered the program during 2002. The total estimate equals \$182, 609.

#### *Adults*

Nineteen adults received treatment services that were provided through the Woodbury County Drug Court Program and area providers. A large majority of those services were provided by Jackson Recovery Center in Sioux City. However, the range of required services and necessary expenses varied widely, from providing a substance abuse evaluation only to in-patient treatment and intensive outpatient services. The Woodbury County Drug Court Program and the Third Judicial District spent a total of \$99,324.41 in 2002, averaging \$5,227.60 per client.

#### **Monitoring**

### *Juveniles*

Several measures are used to track juveniles involved with the drug court system. Two full-time juvenile trackers, who work directly with clients at school and home, each earn \$44,000 in salary and benefits. An outside tracking agency is contracted to provide part-time support for other juvenile clients. Outside trackers estimate they work with 30 juvenile clients and spend four hours weekly at a cost of \$15 per contact hour. This totals an annual cost of \$93,600. School Liaison Officers, local police officers posted in Sioux City high schools, spend an estimated 20 percent of their on-the-job time with juveniles assigned to Drug Court. Investment associated with school liaison officers involved with Drug Court juveniles is estimated at 22,329.60 for 2002. Urine samples are collected and sent to laboratories by probation officers to test for the presence of drugs within the client's system. They can occur at random; however, the client is more likely to submit urine samples early into their treatment program. The Drug Court Program pays a local laboratory approximately \$30,000 annually to manage approximately 1154 tests; unfortunately, it is not possible to delineate the number of tests for juveniles and adults.

Other methods include the use of electronic bracelets, home arrest, and neighborhood patrolling costs. Several students may be enrolled in Trosper-Hoyt or Individual Learning Center (ILC), alternative schools for academically deficient or troubled students who cannot work within a traditional educational setting. They are open and accessible to the probation officers at any time. Financial costs are born by the Sioux City Community School District. While there are societal costs, funded by local and state tax dollars, involved with the program, these expenses are not encumbered by the Drug Court Program. Unlike adults, juveniles are not responsible for costs associated with electronic or home monitoring. The Woodbury County Drug Court paid \$9,125 on such monitoring programs.

### *Adults*

As mentioned earlier, adult Drug Court clients are provided more autonomy than their juvenile counterparts. Both groups meet at least biweekly with their probation officers and frequent urinalysis are provided throughout their Drug Court experience. Clients are subject to reasonable search and seizure on their person or property if substance abuse or illegal activity is suspected. However, ankle bracelets and trackers are not provided to or required of adult probationers involved with Drug Court. Adult clients are either unemployed or underemployed. If an adult is monitored, he or she must reimburse Woodbury County for their expenses which can

cost up to \$75 weekly. As a result, adult services rely heavily upon counseling reports, urinalyses, and client behavior to monitor one's progress through the program.

<b>Account for Drug Court</b>	<b>Personnel and Supply Requirements</b>	<b>Cost Per Account</b>	<b>Total Costs</b>
<i>Administrative and Court Costs</i>	3.5 Juvenile Probation Officers	202,979.95	
	2.0 Adult Probation Officers	131,759.46	
	3 Administrative Assistants	74,778.80	
	1 Transcriber	<u>26,000</u>	
	Total Personnel Costs		409,518.21
	2 Associate Juvenile Judges	(6,732)	
	3 District Associate Judges	(10,098)	
	5 District Judges	<u>(19,305)</u>	
	Total Judge Costs		(36,135)
	Legal Fees in 2002		
	For Juveniles	7,200	
	For Adults	<u>5,700</u>	12,900
	29 Community Panel Judges	(35,755.20)	
	52 Meals for Community Panel Judges and Judicial Trainings Per Year	<u>11,371.98</u>	(24,383.22)
	Grant writing	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
<i>Subtotal</i>			<u>362,899.99</u>
<i>Assessment and Treatment Costs</i>	24 Juveniles who completed in Year 2002 @ \$7608.71 per client	182,609.00	
	19 Adults who completed in Year 2002 @ \$5227.06 per client	<u>99,324.41</u>	
<i>Subtotal</i>			<u>281,933.41</u>
<i>Monitoring Costs</i>	2 Trackers @ \$44,000 each	88,000.00	
	Contractor for less-needy Juvenile Offenders	93,000.00	
	School Liaison Officers at three	22,329.60	

	area high schools		
	Urinalysis costs	<u>30,000.00</u>	
<i>Subtotal</i>			<u>233,329.60</u>
<b><i>Total Annual Estimated Costs</i></b>			<b><u>878,163.00</u></b>
	Total Estimated Annual Costs Divided by Number of Clients Enrolled Annually Regardless of Graduation Status	878,163/175	<i>5,018.07 annually per client</i>

#### *Program Costs for Traditional System*

#### **Administrative and Court Costs**

##### *Juvenile*

There are similar, yet differing, components between the Woodbury County Drug Court Program and its traditional Juvenile Court Services programs. Both programs encounter administrative and court administration fees, monitoring fees and judge-related costs, legal expenses and monitoring costs. However, the traditional system may not detect a drug or alcohol problem among its clientele until one commits crime while under the influence of a mood-altering substance. Supervisors and trackers may or may not be available to them during this time. Furthermore, the probation officers have a higher caseload thereby preventing them from spending as much time as a drug court client would have within the juvenile system.

Since Woodbury County Drug Court is a post-plea program, police and investigation expenses are indirect costs. The accuracy of this study may be questioned if these figures were relevant in one area but not to another one; therefore, such expenses will not be considered as a valid factor in either account. The court system pays approximately the same amount per juvenile investigation regardless of the crime or sentence. As with juvenile cases, issues such as victim compensation, lost wages, jury and witness time have little, if any, impact on the related expenses. Victims may be compensated. However, if juvenile clients are expected to pay damages, they are court-ordered to do so by completing an assigned number of community service hours. This information was inconsistently available per client so their contributions cannot be used to offset Juvenile Drug Court investment. Many juvenile clients are usually not employed and are full-time students; therefore, lost wages from any

employment situation would not apply. Juvenile court hearings have no associated jury costs. As a result, lost income due to victim or parental involvement cannot be accurately measured and reflected in the overall societal costs.

The traditional Juvenile Court Services Program is funded with dollars funded with state General Fund dollars as allocated by the Iowa State Legislature to the Third Judicial Court District. These costs include salaries and benefits for eight juvenile probation officers equaling \$527,037.84 ( $65,879.73 \times 8$ ) One supervisor and a  $\frac{3}{4}$  time director earning salaries and benefits equal to \$125,557.23 [ $65,879.73 + (79,570 \times .75)$ ]. Four administrative assistants receive 50 to 100 percent of their salaries and benefits from this funding source, an amount totaling \$122,077.60. While the number of juvenile probationers fluctuates between 240 to 360 persons annually, each probation officer averages 50 offenders annually. The total administrative costs average \$774,672.67 each year over the past five years.

District judges and Drug Court Community Panel Judges donate their time allocated to Drug Court proceedings. Two associate juvenile judges can sentence criminals found guilty of drug-related, nonviolent crimes to Drug Court. Each juvenile judge earns \$134,640 annually, including salaries and benefits, for a total cost of \$269,280. Furthermore, each judge supervises one full-time court reporter who earns approximately \$121,920. This totals \$243,840 annually. Since there are no consistent voluntary donations provided directly to the program, the traditional program receives no in-kind support.

As with Drug Court clients, the Juvenile Justice Center averages three hours per juvenile client and charge the same rate, \$50 per hour, to represent juvenile defenders. Approximately 300 juveniles were represented by counsel each year, costing \$45,000 in General Fund dollars to protect the juveniles' legal rights.

#### *Adults*

The Woodbury County Adult Probation Program operates similarly to like organizations throughout the country. The client reports to a probation officer and is subject to search, unannounced check-ins at employment sites, etc. All restitution and community service hours must be completed prior to release. They are more responsible for their own actions than their adult Drug Court counterparts. The Iowa Court Information System (ICIS) website, [http://www.judicial.state.ia.us/online\\_records/](http://www.judicial.state.ia.us/online_records/), shows no evidence of any client appearing before a jury prior to sentencing into the traditional probationary program. If an adult were found to present oneself before a jury trial, he or she was not considered for the study. The number of community service hours as well as total

restitution amounts was not available for either source. Also, there is no evidence if any of the client's attended court or met with one's probation officer during normal working hours and if this impacted their earning potential.

Three probation officers work directly with adult clients, each earning an average of \$65,879.73 in annual salary and benefits. However, nine probation officers spend 25 percent of their time supervising adults who live in Woodbury County at a cost of \$148,229.38 [9 X (65,879.73 X .25)]. Support staff earned \$74,778.80 on an annual basis. While all adult records are maintained within their system, the two adult officers coordinate drug court hearings directly through administrative staff housed within the Juvenile Services Center. Five district judges and two district associate judges are assigned to the courts, costing a total of \$1,078,200 annually in salary and benefits. As with juvenile court judges, each of the district and associate district judges supervises one full-time court reporter. Each earns approximately \$121,920 in salary and benefits. This totals \$975,360 in annual costs. No in-kind donations are provided.

As with Drug Court clients, public defenders work with adult clients. They average three hours per adult client and charge the same rate, \$50 per hour, to represent adult defendants. Most rely upon the Public Defender's Office for legal representation. While this may not be paid through the Drug Court accounts, they are an expense to society. Approximately 884 adults were represented by counsel each year, costing \$132,600 annually (884 clients X \$50 X 3 hours).

### **Assessment and Treatment**

#### *Adult and Juvenile*

While clients in need of services are never denied them, it may be less apparent to a probation officer with a larger caseload. This is particularly true when most clients attempt to conceal substance abuse out of a fear of more strict conditions or incarceration. On average, traditional probation officers average 50 clients on a daily basis. As a result, the probationer may not receive much attention from the courts during one's probationary period unless another crime is committed. If a client commits a non-violent, substance abuse-related offense that involves drugs and alcohol while on probation or is intoxicated in the probation officer's presence, he or she is asked to complete the SASSI and referred to Drug Court for assistance. If the client has a demonstrated dependence or abuse with a mood-altering substance, assessment and treatment costs would be paid for by the Drug Court Program. Otherwise, six probation officers earn the same salary and benefits as their Drug Court counterparts but manage, on average, 25 additional cases.

## Monitoring

### *Juvenile*

Monitoring responsibilities appear to be left to the discretion of the probation officer working within the traditional system. Probation officers rely upon trackers and school liaison officers to inform them of their clients. The probation officers appear to be more directly involved with and solely responsible for this activity than those officers working with the Drug Court Program. This activity includes tracking school attendance at a traditional setting or at one of the on-site alternative schools. Other methods include the use of electronic bracelets, home arrest, and neighborhood patrolling costs. Unlike adults, juveniles are not responsible for costs associated with electronic or home monitoring. The Woodbury County Juvenile Court Services pays \$9,125 on such programs for those clients who are not part of the Drug Court Program. The same costs associated with full-time trackers, tracking services, and use of School Liaison Officers is approximately equal regardless of the program. All three groups work with troubled youth and provide assistance as well as monitoring throughout their probationary period.

### *Adult*

Traditional probation clients are provided more autonomy than their adult Drug Court counterparts. While clients do meet on a regular basis with probation officers, the amount of time an officer may spend varies based upon the crime the client committed and the client's risk of violation. As a result, the probation officer may meet infrequently with the client or visit on a continuous basis. Clients are subject to reasonable search and seizure on their person or property if substance abuse or illegal activity is suspected. Like their Drug Court counterparts, traditional probation officers do not require the use of an ankle bracelet or home arrest of traditional adult probationers. Most clients are either unemployed or underemployed. If an adult is monitored, he or she must reimburse Woodbury County for their expenses which can cost up to \$75 weekly. As a result, adult services rely heavily upon counseling reports, urinalyses, and client behavior to monitor one's progress through the program.

Account for Drug Court	Personnel and Supply Requirements	Cost Per Account	Costs
<i>Administrative and Court Costs</i>	8 Juvenile Probation Officers	527,037.84	774,672.67
	1.75 Juvenile Supervisor/Director	125,557.23	
	4 Administrative Assistants	<u>122,077.60</u>	
	<i>Subtotal for Juveniles</i>		
	3.0 Adult Probation Officers	197,639.19	
	9.0 Adult Probation Officers		

	with 25% Woodbury Co. client caseload	148,229.38	
	3 Administrative Assistants	<u>74,778.80</u>	
	<i>Subtotal for Adults</i>		<u>420,647.37</u>
	Total Personnel Costs		1,195,320.04
<i>Assessment and Treatment Costs</i>		0.00	
<i>Community Drug Court Panel Costs</i>		0.00	
<i>Monitoring Costs</i>			9,125.00
<i>Judge-related Costs</i>			
	2 Associate Juvenile Judges	269,280.00	
	2 Juvenile Court Reporters	243,840.00	
	3 District Associate Judges and 5 District Judges	1,078,200.00	
	8 Adult Court Reporters	975,360.00	<u>2,566,680.00</u>
	Total Judge Costs		
<i>Public Defenders and Prosecutors</i>	Legal Fees in 2002		
	For Juveniles	45,000.00	
	For Adults	<u>132,600.00</u>	177,600.00
<i>Trackers</i>			
	2 Trackers @ \$44,000 annually	88,000.00	
<i>Tracking Support</i>			
	Contractor for less-needy Juvenile Offenders	93,000.00	
	School Liaison Officers at three area high schools	22,329.60	
	Urinalysis costs	<u>30,000.00</u>	<u>233,329.60</u>
<b>Total Annual Costs</b>			<b>4,172,929.64</b>
<b>Divided by Total No. of Clients Served Annually Years – 1184</b>			<b>3,524.43 per client</b>

Drug Court costs, on average, \$5,018.07 per client; meanwhile traditional probation programs costs \$3,524.43. Traditional probation programs costs \$1,493.64 less than Drug Court. However there are some differences. First, Drug Court clients are at higher risk for alcohol- and drug-related behaviors and crimes. A higher, initial investment is necessary to provide effective treatment to a smaller client population. Traditional



probation programs require consistent and continuous financial investment throughout the client's participation in the program.

To determine the overall cost-effectiveness of the Drug Court Program, the 2002 graduates of the program were compared to persons who demonstrated similar characteristics but entered the traditional probation system.

#### Outcome of the Cost-Effectiveness Across Comparison Groups

##### *Juvenile*

Thirty-five persons were selected who completed either the traditional juvenile probation or entered the Woodbury County Drug Court Program during the 2002 calendar year. The qualifications for the randomly selected participants for this portion are as follows. First, the clients committed exact same crime in the Woodbury County area. Secondly, the client entered in and fulfilled all requirements of the drug court program or the conventional court system in 2002. They were of similar age, race, and gender. The clients had the same zip code or live in the same neighborhoods. This allowed researchers to determine if the matched pair lived in the same or similar neighborhoods. Public information about the client's legal involvement was available through the Iowa Criminal Information System (ICIS), the state's publicly accessible criminal justice program. Once selected, researchers determined if the client's were exposed to treatment and/or 12-step programs.

Using ICIS, the follow-up study was completed over the next 30 months to determine if the participants had committed criminal acts since their release from either program. Persons who were terminated or recidivated during their participation in either system were not included in the evaluation.

The findings show Drug Court is more successful at preventing a "revolving door" than traditional probation programs, regardless of the clients' demographic or criminal history.

Overall, males were more likely than females to participate in either group. Caucasians were more likely to participate than any other racial group. However, they comprise the largest racial population in the county: This finding is consistent with general census data. Employment rates were equal among both groups.

Over 57 percent of clients sentenced to Drug Court reported alcohol abuse. Three-quarters admitted to marijuana abuse while only 45 percent reported methamphetamine abuse at intake. Many were employed at the time of arrest. If the juvenile was primarily addicted to alcohol, he or she was less likely to be employed than any other substance abuser. Marijuana and amphetamine abuse did not appear to have a significant impact upon employment. Amphetamine abuse crossed equally along gender lines and demanded in greater quantities among

Caucasians when compared to other racial groups. Another significant fact was the inverse relationship between criminal activity after release and participation in Drug Court.

In Vick and Lamb-Keating's 2005 study, it was estimated that 54 percent of all juveniles who participated over the five-year lifespan of the Woodbury County Drug Court Program had not re-offended. after release However, 65 percent had no criminal record past their release from Drug Court in 2002. Of the 35 percent arrested, they had one arrest post-release. Of those who re-offended, only 25 percent committed a criminal act; as a result, this will increase imprisonment costs. In their study, Vick and Lamb-Keating determined that juveniles were more likely to commit crimes at 30, 60, 90, six months, or one year after their Drug Court release. There does not appear to be any systematic predictor that estimates the time Drug Court clients are more likely to recidivate. The additional costs faced by Woodbury County's Juvenile Detention Center for a minimum one night's stay is estimated at \$918.75  $[(17.5 \text{ persons} \times 35 \%) \times \$160/\text{night housing costs}]$ . Additional expenses due to extended retention cannot be estimated.

Among those who were involved in the traditional probation system, 66.7 percent received a criminal citation after release. Unlike their Drug Court counterparts, traditional clients who did recidivate were more likely to receive two post-release arrest and committed criminal acts at a rate of 40 percent. These juveniles were more likely, on average, to recommit crime within the four months after release. The additional estimated costs are \$1867.60 for one night's detention, twice the amount spent among Drug Court juvenile re-offenders. Since a higher proportion of traditional clients commit criminal crimes, they will remain in custody longer thereby increasing costs.

Juveniles in both groups committed the following crimes regardless of their participation in either program: Driving without a License, Operating a Motor Vehicle While Intoxicated, Possession with Intent to Sell, Simple Assault, or Absconded Probation.

#### *Adults*

Twenty-nine adults were selected for comparison. Equally matched across gender lines, they were predominately Caucasians. Most were employed. Over 86 percent reported alcohol abuse while 55.2 percent reported marijuana abuse or dependence. Less than half reported any methamphetamine abuse or dependence. Regardless of the client's assignment to Drug Court or traditional probation, over 83 percent reported alcohol abuse or dependence at some point in time. Over 72 percent of those in Drug Court reported marijuana use while the

inverse is true for those on traditional probation. As for methamphetamine abuse, 50 percent of Drug Court clients reported the use of methamphetamines while 45 percent of those assigned to more traditional probation reported any use or dependence.

Among Drug Court participants approximately averaged 73 percent over the past five years do not recommit crime (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005). If the former Drug Court client re-offended, it occurred with the first month following release. If one chose alcohol as his or her primary drug, he or she was less likely to use methamphetamines. A moderate relationship exists between those who were primarily marijuana users and their overall success in Drug Court. Of all users, marijuana users who completed the program were more likely to relapse than others. One very strong correlation exists between employment status and criminal activity among Drug Court clients. If the client were gainfully employed and maintained employment after release, he or she were highly unlikely to commit criminally-based offenses. Like with their juvenile counterparts, adults who participated in the traditional probationary programs were far less successful. Among the 2002 group, 77.8 percent did not receive a citation after release. While 22 percent of adult graduates re-offended, only 22 percent of this group committed criminal acts. The average costs incurred for housing adults in Woodbury County Jail is \$60 per day. The additional expenses for housing a former Drug Court client in jail for one day are \$191.40  $[(14.5 \text{ persons} \times 22\%) \times \$60]$ .

Nearly 50 percent of those involved with the traditional probationary period committed criminal crimes after release. Using the same formula, housing expenses for traditional clients who re-offend for one day in jail totals \$783. This is four times the amount spent on recidivating Drug Court clients. Since 50 percent of these clients commit criminally-based offenses, they will be housed for longer periods thereby increasing the county's financial burden. Furthermore, they will not be with their families, earning salaries, or paying taxes into the local system. Since Drug Court clients are more likely to be employed, involved with family and community, etc., they are contributing to the local tax base while those who are jailed cannot.

If a former client who attended Drug Court or went through the traditional probation program committed a crime, he or she was more likely to commit one of the following: possession of drugs with intent to sell or theft. Other crimes included open container, driving without a license, driving with a suspended license, or criminal trespassing.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

Like many other American drug courts, Woodbury County, Iowa's program theoretically bases itself on therapeutic jurisprudence and social bonds theory. It receives both federal and state dollars and is transitioning toward a state-funded program. Except for its post-plea and community-based approaches, Its mission, goals, and admission requirements are similar to others around the nation. With its large, up-front financial investments, the community-based approach used by the Woodbury County judicial system appears to be improving their clients' lives and helping them remain drug- and alcohol-free. It appears the Woodbury County Drug Court Program is moderately successful in reducing recidivism while reducing longer term expenses. This is most apparent when the 2002 cohort is compared to a control group. The program slows the "revolving door" of criminal activity that continues among those who participate in traditional probation thereby reducing crime as well as social and financial costs paid by local and state taxpayers.

## References

- Adler, F., Mueller, G. and Laufer, W. (2004). *Criminology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Co.
- Banks, D. and D. C. Gottfredson. (2004) Participation in drug treatment court and time to rearrest in *Justice Quarterly*, 21, 3.
- Belenko, S. J. A Fagan, and T. Dumanovsky. (1994). The effects of legal sanctions on recidivism in special drug courts. *Justice System Journal*. 17: 53-81.
- Belenko, S. (1998a). *Research on drug courts: A critical review*. New York: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.
- Belenko, S. (1998b). *Behind bars: Substance abuse and America's prison population*. New York: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.
- Belenko, S. (2001). *Research on drug courts: A critical review 2001 update*. New York: National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.
- Breckenridge, J. F., L.T. winfree, J.R. Maupin, and D. L. Clason. (2000). Drunk drivers, DWI drug court, treatment, and recidivism: Who fails? *Justice research and policy*, 2, 1: 87-105.
- Deschenes, E. P., S. Turner, and P.W. Greenwood. (1995). Drug court or probation? An experimental evaluation of Maricopa County's drug court. *Justice system journal* 18: 55-73.
- Gendreau P. and D. Andrews. (2001). Final report conducted on the Drug Court of the Third Judicial District of Iowa's Department of Correctional Service. *Correctional Program Assessment Inventory, 1-13*. Des Moines: Department of Correctional Service.
- Gottfredson, D.C., B.W. Kearley, S.S. Najaka, and C.M.Rocha (2005). The Baltimore city drug treatment court: Three-year self-report outcome study in *Evaluation Review*, 29, 1, 42.
- Hughes, T. and D. J. Wilson. (2003). *Reentry trends in the United States: Inmates returning to the community after serving time in prison*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Lazowski, L. E., F. Miller, M. Boye, and G. Miller. (1998). Efficacy of Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory - 3 (SASSI -3) in identifying substance dependence disorders in clinical settings in *Journal of Personality Assessment* 71(1): 114-128.
- Model Drug Offender Accountability and Treatment Act, HSB 221, 78<sup>th</sup> Iowa State Legislature. (1999).
- National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information. (2004). *Successful Strategies for Recruiting, Training, and Utilizing Volunteers. A Guide for Faith - and Community - Based Service Providers. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Faith - Based and Community Initiative*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. (1998). *Drug treatment in the criminal justice system*. Washington, DC.: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Peters, R. H. and M. R. Murrin. (2000). Effectiveness of treatment-based drug courts in reducing criminal recidivism. *Criminal justice and behavior* 27 (1), 72-96.
- Prochaska, J. O. and DiClemnte C. C. (1982). Transtheoretical therapy: toward a more integrative model of change in *Psychotherapy: Theory Research and Practice*. 19, 276-288.

- Prouty, D. (2002). Governor's Office on Drug Control Policy in *Iowa Legislative Fiscal Bureau*. Des Moines, Iowa: Iowa State Legislature. Retrieved November 30, 2005 from <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Isadocs/IssReview/2003/IRLRB001.PDF>.
- SASSI Institute. (n.d). Retrieved November 30, 2005 from <http://www.sassi.com/sassi/index.shtml>.
- Shanahan, Marian, Emily Lascsar, Marion Haas, Bronwyn Lind, Don Weatherburn, and Shuling Chen. (2004). Cost effectiveness analysis of the New South Wales adult drug court program in *Evaluation Review*. 28, 3-27.
- Sanford, J.S. and B. A. Arrigo. (2005). Lifting the cover on drug courts: Evaluation findings and policy concerns in *International journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology*. 49, 3, 239
- Spohn, C., R. K. Piper, T. Martin, and E. D. Frenzel. (2001). Drug courts and recidivism: The results of an evaluation using two comparison groups and multiple indicators of recidivism. *Journal of drug issues*. 31 (1). 149-176.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2000). *Quick facts about Woodbury County, Iowa*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved December 5, 2005 from <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/>.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (1997). *Defining drug courts: The key components*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (2002). *Drug court monitoring, evaluation, and management information systems: National scope needs assessment monograph*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. Retrieved <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/bja/195077.pdf> on November 29, 2005.
- U.S. Government Accounting Office (2005). *Evidence indicates recidivism reductions and mixed results for other outcomes*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Accounting Office.
- Vick D., and J. Lamb-Keating (2005). *Woodbury County Community Drug Court and its Clients*. Des Moines, Iowa: Third Judicial Court District of the State of Iowa and the Iowa Attorney General's Office.
- Wexler, D. B. (1996). Therapeutic jurisprudence and changing conceptions of legal scholarship. in D.B. Wexler and B. J. Winick (Eds.), *The law in a therapeutic key: Developmetns in therapeutic jurisprudence*. (pp. 597-610) Durham, NC: Carolina University Press.
- Wilhelm, D. F. and N. R. Turner (2002). *Issues in brief: Is the budget crisis changing the way we look at sentencing and incarceration?* New York: Vera Institute of Justice.
- Woodbury County Third Judicial District. (1999). *Woodbury County Community Drug Court Participant Handbook*. Sioux City, Iowa: Third Judicial District.

